



Key Agencies Group
Thursday 14th March 2019

Meeting summary & actions

Meeting Summary and Actions

Summary

Members of the Key Agencies Group met on Thursday 14th March 2019. The meeting was chaired by Alasdair McKenzie of HES, hosted by SEPA and took place at The Station Hotel, Perth. Various topics were discussed including the Planning Bill, KAG conference feedback and the work of the current KAG subgroups. We were also pleased to welcome guest speakers from Strathclyde Partnership for Transport, Fife Council on the Tay Cities deal, Scottish Gas Networks and The Scottish Land Commission.

Attendees

Alasdair McKenzie – Historic Environment Scotland (*Chair*)
Anna Gaffney – SEPA (*Secretariat*)
Katherine Lakeman – SEPA
Alan Farquhar – SEPA
Sean Caswell – SEPA
Fiona Rice – Scottish Natural Heritage
Peter Hutchinson – Scottish Natural Heritage
Adele Shaw – Historic Environment Scotland
Alison Baisden – Historic Environment Scotland
Debbie Livingstone – Systra / Transport Scotland
Sasha Laing – Forestry Commission Scotland
Andrew Mcallister – Forest Enterprise Scotland
Helen Fallas – British Geological Survey
Trevor Moffat – The Improvement Service
Peter Noad – Scottish Enterprise
Steve Malone – Architecture and Design Scotland

(Item 8) Bruce Kiloh, SPT, Regional Transport Strategy
(Item 9) Morag Millar, Fife Council
(Item 10) Stuart Forrest, Scottish Gas Networks
(Item 11) Katherine Pollard, Scottish Land Commission

Apologies

Jim MacDonald – Architecture and Design Scotland
Kate Givan – Architecture and Design Scotland
Brendan Turvey – Scottish Natural Heritage
Ivan Clark – Scottish Natural Heritage
Claire Peters – SportScotland
Steven Smith – Scottish Water
David Wood – PAS

Actions

Action	Who?	When?
PAS to share information on current Place Standard Work	David McAllistair	ASAP
All to review KAG factsheets for each organisation and advise Anna Gaffney or Alasdair McKenzie of any updates or amendments required.	All	ASAP
All to review Masterplan Consent Area letter drafted by Alasdair and provide final comments to be incorporated before the letter is issued in the next few weeks.	All	ASAP
Circulate report from recent IS/Audit Scotland planning Roundtable discussion	Alasdair McKenzie	circulate with KAG meeting note
Alison Baisden to draw together a package of existing information from the recent KAG conference including FAQs, information and photos, to allow KAG members to use and share the content of the event within their own networks.	Alison Baisden	ASAP
Trevor Moffat to update the HOPS Executive meeting at 15 April meeting and the Development sub-committee at the end of May on the KAG Placemaking proposal.	Trevor Moffat	March and May 2019
Peter Hutchinson to contact the volunteers to begin drawing together joint KAG statement on purpose, principles and partnerships. Volunteers include, Peter Noad, Sean Caswell and Adele Shaw.	Peter Hutchinson	ASAP
All, where relevant, to begin pulling together Planning Performance reports for 2018/19 and to pass contact names for PPF leads to Alison Baisden.	All	ASAP
Alison Baisden to convene PPF peer review meeting.	Alison Baisden	ASAP

2019 meeting dates and locations

- **Thursday 13th June, 2019**
HES, Edinburgh (John Sinclair House)
- **Thursday 12th September, 2019**
SportScotland, Glasgow
- **Thursday 12th December, 2019**
(Host & location tbc)

Agenda

1. Welcome, introductions and apologies
2. KAG purpose, video and FAQs for elected members on IS webpage
3. Planning Bill and other updates (Alasdair McKenzie)
 - Masterplan Consent Areas: KAG briefing
 - Performance: feedback from the High Level Group on performance
 - Resourcing: feedback from IS/Audit Scotland Planning Roundtable
4. KAG conference feedback (Alison Baisden / group members)
5. KAG placemaking proposal (Katherine Lakeman)
6. Working group updates and discussion:
 - KAG skills and training – (Alison Baisden / group members)
 - Placemaking & Joint KAG Statement (Katherine Lakeman/ Peter Hutchinson)
 - Environmental Evidence (Helen Fallas / group members)
 - NPF 4 (Brendan Turvey / group members)
 - IGOR (Fiona Rice/Update from Brendan Turvey)
7. Planning Performance Reports & peer review (Alison Baisden)

Lunch
8. Bruce Kiloh, Strathclyde Partnership for Transport – Regional Transport Strategy
9. Morag Millar – Strategic Growth & City Deals Programme Manager, Fife Council
10. Stuart Forrest – Network Planning Manager, Scottish Gas Networks
11. Katherine Pollard, Scottish Land Commission – opportunities between SLC & KAG
12. AOB
 - Biodiversity Challenge Fund – Fiona Rice
 - Clerk of Works paper – Fiona Rice
 - Historic Environment Policy for Scotland – Alasdair McKenzie
 - Historic Environment Scotland Corporate Plan 2019-21 – Alasdair McKenzie
 - Crown Estate Scotland: Rural Assets Strategy – Alasdair McKenzie
 - Infrastructure Commission for Scotland: Call for views and evidence – Alasdair McKenzie

Meeting summary

1. Welcome, introduction and apologies

2. KAG purpose, video and FAQs for elected members on IS webpage

Alasdair provided an update on the KAG page of the Scottish Government website – www.gov.scot/groups/key-agencies-group. The content has been migrated from the previous location and now provides an updated purpose statement, introductory video and FAQs. Going forward the website can be used to host meeting notes and other key KAG documents. We can also include links to our annual Planning Performance Framework Reports.

Some further updates to website are ongoing and if anyone has any suggestions please let Alasdair or Anna know. Alasdair noted that the new KAG website is not yet linked through from the [Partners in Planning](#) website and would look into this.

Alasdair also reminded everyone that the Improvement Service were asking if agencies have any updates to their [factsheets for elected members](#).

Action: All to review KAG factsheets for each organisation and advise Anna Gaffney or Alasdair McKenzie of any updates or amendments required.

3. Planning Bill and other updates (Alasdair McKenzie)

Masterplan Consent Areas: KAG briefing

Alasdair provided an update to the group as to the current progression of the joint KAG statement on Masterplan Consent Areas, advising that the draft letter containing KAG's comments on the matter had been circulated and would be issued in the next few weeks. The group reiterated its concerns with the amended provisions for Masterplan Consent Areas and discussed handling.

Action: All to review Masterplan Consent Area letter drafted by Alasdair and provide final comments.

Performance: feedback from the High Level Group (HLG) on performance

Alasdair provided an update from the most recent officer-level High Level Group meeting. Papers for this meeting have been circulated separately.

The HLG covered multiple issues including ongoing discussions regarding fees, resources and performance. It was attended by a number of representatives from Scottish Government, RTPi, planning authorities, COSLA, HoPS and the Key Agencies Group. Representatives from Homes from Scotland and the Scottish Property Federation attended a workshop session in the afternoon around planning performance. The discussion focused around how to measure performance going forward, picking up some of the recent findings from the research undertaken by John Lord/Yellow Book

and Nick Wright. The group also reflected on the planning performance framework as it stands and how this could be developed going forward.

Resourcing: feedback from IS/Audit Scotland Planning Roundtable

Alasdair provided an update from the most recent IS/Audit Scotland Planning Roundtable meeting. A summary of this discussion as circulated and a final report detailing the outcome of this discussion will be published by the Improvement Service and Audit Scotland shortly. The question of fees and discretionary charging came up at various points, including a brief discussion around whether Key Agencies should charge for our services. Noting that various agencies looked into this previously and have not taken it forward, Alasdair asked the group to update on any recent or further discussions being held by individual agencies.

Alan Farquhar advised that SEPA have had discussions on this topic before however the organisation had no formal position at present and were not actively taking this forward. Peter Hutchinson agreed this was the same for SNH, adding that it was important to avoid isolating partners from potentially engaging. ADS noted that it would not be charging to maintain their commitment to remaining impartial in the planning process.

The group agreed that the topic is likely to continue being raised as the Planning Bill progresses through Parliament and thereafter should there be a further consultation on planning fees and discretionary charging for pre-application advice.

Sean Caswell noted that if the quality of submissions were to improve, the resource required to review consultations would reduce. Peter Hutchinson expanded on this, considering whether in future charging would be levelled at planning applications which did not comply with the Local Development Plan, but acknowledged that a consistent approach would have to be developed.

Alasdair acknowledged both these comments and noted that in England a variety of charging approaches were being explored. He also noted the charging issue had been raised with other consent applications type such as Listed Building Consent which is currently free and that it is possible some planning authorities may raise the question of cost recovery for this service.

Trevor Moffat noted that there are a number of Local Authorities across Scotland that provide some form of charging for pre-application advice. Trevor also advised that that HOPS are reviewing two reports with regard to the cost recovery of charging for pre-application engagement. These should be circulated shortly.

Action: *Alasdair/Anna to circulate roundtable report amongst the group when it is available.*

4. KAG conference feedback (Alison Baisden / group members)

Alison Baisden gave a helpful presentation on the feedback provided by attendees at the recent KAG conference. Alison also highlighted that photos from the event are now available and can be provided to KAG members.

The conference focused on the role and remit of KAG, with attendance from Local Authorities (both rural and urban), private sector and third sector organisations. It was noted that not all attendees were early to mid-level planners, with a number of attendees having a high level of experience. The speakers on the panel were well received, however some feedback from the attendees noted that there is value in hearing about what to do when things don't go so well – e.g. lessons learned from difficult cases. Attendees also noted the benefit in having more time for a consultee surgery with agency representatives.

Alasdair noted that the feedback he had heard had been very positive, with the speakers noting that they had really enjoyed the event.

Action: *Alison Baisden to draw together a package of information on the event including FAQs, information and photos, to allow KAG members to use and share the content of the event within their own networks.*

5. KAG placemaking proposal (Katherine Lakeman / Peter Hutchinson)

Katherine Lakeman provided an update on KAG's placemaking proposal following a number of subgroup workshops and discussions which have been taken place in recent months. Katherine outlined that with support from ADS, the subgroup now had an outline proposal and were seeking to identify projects for piloting the new approach. The long term view for the placemaking subgroup is to ensure the principles of placemaking identified within development proposal and become integrated with planning practice.

Katherine advised that the subgroup now has to consider how to engage with planning authorities whether it is through development planning or management, or in a more facilitative role through identifying common practises and a shared commitment to specific placemaking outcomes across teams. Trevor Moffat identified that there may be value in presenting the proposal to HOPS to identify opportunities, noting that he could raise it at the Executive Meeting on 15 April, and the Development sub-committee meeting at the end of May.

The group then went on to discuss how to promote the placemaking approach, whether identifying a site ourselves for the pilot, or promoting the approach through suitable networks and gaining high level endorsement.

The group then discussed the merits of a number of approaches, including monitoring Local Development Plans and contacting Planning Authorities directly. Alasdair noted that Jim McDonald from ADS had highlighted the potential to work with Place Commission Glasgow, and Alison Baisden added

that the Glasgow City Council were at the beginning of their development plan process which may offer similar opportunities. Alan Farquhar noted that the Vacant and Derelict Land Taskforce may also offer opportunities due to the identification of a large number sites and an impetus to take action on them.

Alasdair concluded discussions that there appeared to be consensus within the group with regards to the contents of the placemaking proposal, and confirmed that the paper should be shared.

Peter Hutchinson then raised the question of whether there would be any value in KAG producing a statement which outlines our purpose, principles and commitment to partnership working. The statement could include a reference to the work of the subgroups such as placemaking for example. The style could be similar to that of the new SNH 'planning for great places' document. The group responded positively, agreeing that this was a good idea and demonstrated an ongoing commitment to partnership working, both as the Key Agencies and with industry. Alasdair raised the point that perhaps this was something we may want to consider co-producing with industry. As there was support from the group Peter agreed to lead on producing the statement with the assistance of the following volunteers, Peter Noad, Sean Caswell and Adele Shaw.

Action: Trevor Moffat to update the HOPS Executive meeting at 15 April meeting and the Development sub-committee at the end of May on the KAG Placemaking proposal.

Action: Peter Hutchinson to contact the volunteers to begin drawing together joint KAG statement on purpose, principles and partnerships. Volunteers include, Peter Noad, Sean Caswell and Adele Shaw.

6. Working group updates and discussion:

o Environmental Evidence Sub-Group

Helen Fallas provided an update on the work of the Environmental Evidence Sub-Group. The Group have undertaken a 'Show-and-Tell' workshop at the Key Agencies Group Event on 24th January as well as an additional in depth workshop with eight Planning Authorities. This workshop covered how planning authorities grouped information together and what information sources they used and were aware of. The workshops demonstrated that there was inconsistencies between the authorities as to their awareness of what information was available to use as part of their plan preparation, which in turn made it difficult develop specific actions as to what would be the most beneficial tools to produce to assist them in their plan preparation. It is clear that a prototype is required in order to demonstrate application of SE web platform.

Helen also advised that the subgroup's work was particularly timely due to the ongoing discussions with the Planning and Architecture Division (PAD) and the Digitalisation taskforce. She advised that there was funding which was being applied for to accelerate the work on digitising evidence for Scotland's Smart Planning system, with funding potentially available for a fixed term post to further progress this work.

Helen concluded by saying that following the application of the prototype that the Environmental Evidence subgroup would feedback to both the Scottish Government and the Planning Authorities who have been involved in the subgroup's work, identifying learning points and next steps for this work. This is expected to happen at the end of the year.

- *NPF4 Sub-Group*

The NPF4 Sub-Group have agreed their terms of reference and shared these. Their next meeting has been postponed until timescales for the production of NPF4 are agreed. This may not be until late summer 2019.

- *Inter-agency Group on Renewables – IGOR*

The Inter Agency Group on Renewables, currently coordinated by SNH, has been meeting for a number of years to discuss matters affecting the renewables industry and how agencies can work together. It was suggested that going forward IGOR becomes a standing subgroup for the main Key Agencies Group. It was agreed that this made sense and that the work of IGOR should now be reported through our quarterly meetings and as part of our annual joint statement on agency performance etc.

7. Planning Performance Reports & peer review (Alison Baisden)

As with previous years, consultants were appointed to review the performance reports from planning authorities and this feedback has now been issued. Alasdair advised that there had been no written feedback with regards to the Planning Performance reports for Key Agencies from the Scottish Government, although it had been indicated that SG have no concerns with agency performance and were supportive of the recent joint statement that went to the High-Level Group. It was also noted that this could form the basis of a discussion with Scottish Government once past this busy period for the Planning Bill.

All reporting agencies to note that Planning Performance Frameworks are due to be submitted on 31st July. The group was also asked to pass contact names for PPF leads to Alison Baisden who will convene a PPF peer review meeting towards the end of June in support of the preparation of our next joint statement on performance.

Action: All to email over Planning Performance reports to Alison Baisden for peer review.

Action: Alison Baisden to convene peer review meeting with PPF leads amongst reporting agencies.

8. Bruce Kiloh, Strathclyde Partnership for Transport – Regional Transport Strategy

Bruce Kiloh from Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT) gave a helpful presentation on the Regional Transport Strategy which feeds into a number of other plans such as Local Development Plans and the Strategic Development Plan – ClydePlan.

Bruce outlined that the Regional Transport Strategy is a 20 year vision for transport in the West of Scotland and provided a detailed overview of the importance of a well-connected transport network. He also outlined the importance of public consultation in the creation of the strategy to understand how people used the network to ensure that appropriate decisions for the strategy were made.

Bruce also advised that the document was also undergoing Strategic Environmental Assessment. The strategy is scheduled to be adopted by 2021 with public consultation currently underway until 20 March 2019. He advised that consultation was particularly complex due the timescales for the strategy to cover transport until 2040 and the variety of topics which the consultation had to cover, from future forms of transport, to essential routes for travel.

The group thanked Bruce for the presentation and asked a number of questions. Peter asked if the strategy included active travel as a component. Bruce confirmed that it did and this was a key aspect of the strategy going forward. Sean Caswell asked whether Air Quality had been a consideration of the strategy and Bruce confirmed that SPT had worked closely with SEPA with regards to Air Quality and SPT has challenged itself to do more to understand the impacts of the strategy on air quality. Alasdair asked how SPT engaged with local communities as part of the public consultation. Bruce advised that they had undertaken a targeted approach, undertaking surveys with over 600 community councils and contacting every councillor in the region. Bruce also commented on SPT's positive relationship with the planning authorities and Clydeplan, noting that there was a number of opportunities across the Strathclyde region for change which made it an excellent time for undertaking consultation on the Strategy.

The group again thanked Bruce for the presentation and the overview of the Regional Transport Strategy and advised that if SPT felt that KAG can contribute or assist to please get in touch.

9. Morag Millar – Strategic Growth & City Deals Programme Manager, Fife Council

Morag Millar from Fife Council provided a helpful presentation on Fife's current progress with regard to the Tay Cities Regional Deal. Morag provided an overview to the group regarding the recent signing of the Heads of Terms in Perth following two years of work. The Council, alongside the other partner Councils, Scottish Government and UK Government are now beginning to progress the outline business cases as part of the deal.

Morag provided a brief overview of the Heads of Terms which identified under the headings of an Empowered and Inclusive Tay, An Innovative, International Tay and Infrastructure. These set out the ambitions for the City Deal which included a regional economic strategy, inclusive growth and productivity, employability skills to deliver fair work, growing the biomedical cluster, preparing for a low carbon future and developing a regional transport model. The Council is now progressing the business cases as part of the post heads of terms phase. She provided details of the complexity of this task particularly with regards to timescales and funding, as the City Regional Deal will be signed at the end of 2019.

Morag noted that in order to achieve this then it was vital to ensure that there was collaboration and a clear dialogue with all parties. The group then went on to discuss their experiences of other city deals, including the review of planning applications for proposed sites mentioned within these deals. Morag advised that the City Deal development sites would need to align with the Local Development Plan and were to be considered with the same status as any other planning application. Morag further advised that it was interesting to learn from other City Plans such as Glasgow and Stirling and their interactions with KAG with regards to the business plans and workstreams.

The group thanked Morag for the presentation and the overview of the Tay Cities Regional Deal and advised that if it was considered that KAG can input or assist in any way to please get in touch.

10. Stuart Forrest – Network Planning Manager, Scottish Gas Networks (SGN)

Stuart Forrest, a Network Planning Manager from Scottish Gas Networks provided a helpful presentation of SGN's work and operations in Scotland, exploring the connections between gas network planning and land use planning.

Stuart explained that by contacting Planning Authorities, SGN planners could better understand forthcoming network pressures. However there was complexities in this approach particularly with regard to the certainty of developments coming forward and the sharing data and information. Additionally the decarbonisation of the energy system is another key

consideration of SGN, particularly to ensure assets are not developed which become either stranded or redundant.

Stuart advised that as SGN moves forward it would be beneficial for SGN to improve its understanding of the operations of Planning Authorities in order to understand decision making processes and timescales for developments. The group also considered that this would be beneficial for both Key Agencies and Planning Authorities to have a more comprehensive understanding of infrastructural issues such as energy as part of the local development plans.

Stuart concluded that the future of gas remains uncertain however strategies such as the Scottish Government's Vision for Electricity and Gas Networks: Vision to 2030 do offer a direction to both the industries and planning authorities moving forward.

The group thanked Stuart for the presentation and the overview of the SGN and advised that if it was considered that KAG can input or assist in any way to please get in touch.

11. Katherine Pollard, Scottish Land Commission (SLR) – opportunities between SLC & KAG

Kathie Pollard from the Scottish Land Commission provided a helpful presentation of the work of The Scottish Land Commission and how their work relates to that of KAG. Kathie also provided an update on the SLC work programme and identified potential opportunities for SLC and KAG to work together.

Kathie provided an overview of land reform in Scotland, identifying that a key objective is about making more of Scotland's land for all of Scotland's people. This overview identified a number of specific planning related themes of land reform including vacant and derelict land, community engagement, land value capture, land value tax and public interest led development. Kathie went on to provide a detailed overview of SLC work in these areas, before concluding with a short summary with regards to the opportunities for KAG to contribute to the work streams and how SLC could support KAG activities. These opportunities included the development of skills and practise, promoting culture change, engagement and collaboration.

The group noted that much of the work of the SLC was clearly aligned with that of the Key Agencies, with work streams such as the Vacant and Derelict taskforce already having significant involvement from agencies such as SEPA. The group thanked Kathie for the presentation and the overview of the SLC and advised that if it was considered that KAG can input or assist in any way to please get in touch.

12.A.O.B

- *Biodiversity Challenge – Fiona Rice*
Fiona Rice drew the Biodiversity Challenge to everyone's attention, recommending everyone to participate.
- *Historic Environment Policy for Scotland – Alasdair McKenzie*
Alasdair highlighted that a new policy for the management of Scotland's historic environment would be launching on 1st April and would come into effect on 1st May.
- *Historic Environment Scotland Corporate Plan 2019-21 – Alasdair McKenzie*
Alasdair highlighted that HES's new Corporate Plan would be launched on 1st April.
- *Crown Estate Scotland – Alasdair McKenzie*
Alasdair highlighted that the newly formed Crown Estate Scotland is consulting on a Rural Asset Strategy – closing on 26 April:
<https://consult.gov.scot/crown-estate-strategy-unit/rural-assets-strategy>
- *Infrastructure Commission for Scotland – Alasdair McKenzie*
Alasdair highlighted that the newly formed Infrastructure Commission for Scotland – <https://infrastructurecommission.scot>

The Commission has been established by The Scottish Government to provide an independent assessment of the long term 30-year strategy for infrastructure to meet the future economic growth and societal needs of Scotland. They have also been asked to provide advice to ministers on the delivery of infrastructure in Scotland, including the possible creation of a Scottish National Infrastructure Company. A [call for evidence](#) has been issued, closing on 3 May.